Reducing Disparities in Breastfeeding through Peer and Professional Support

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

OVERVIEW

The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is the voice of the approximately 2,800 local health departments (LHDs) across the country. These city, county, metropolitan, district, and tribal departments work to protect and improve the health of all people and all communities. NACCHO provides resources to help LHD leaders develop public health policies and programs to ensure that communities have access to the vital programs and services people need to keep them protected from disease and disaster. Additionally, NACCHO advocates on behalf of LHDs with federal policymakers for adequate resources, appropriate public health legislation, and sensible policies to address the myriad of challenges facing communities.

With support from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), NACCHO is pleased to offer a funding opportunity for LHDs and community-based public, private, non-profit, or faith-based organizations to provide peer and professional lactation support to African American and underserved (e.g. ethnic minority group or low-income) women and infants. The purpose of this project is to increase implementation of evidence-based and innovative breastfeeding programs, practices, and services at the community level, specifically focused on peer and professional lactation support to breastfeeding mothers in predominantly African American communities; and to develop and maintain public health partnerships critical to building community support for breastfeeding.

NACCHO will make at least 70 awards available to LHDs, community-based public, private, non-profit, or faith-based organizations, and lactation support providers for a 2-year breastfeeding project. Each grantee will receive up to $25,000, per year, to support project activities. Applications must be submitted no later than October 10, 2014 at 6:30 pm E.T. | 3:30 pm P.T. Selections will be made on or about November 15, 2014 and year one of the project period will run from the date of contract execution to June 30, 2015. Although the project is intended for two years, funding for year two is not guaranteed, and is contingent upon receipt of federal funds to support activities, and approval of year one final progress reports.

NACCHO will host two (2) optional webinars on September 25, 2014 at 1:30 pm E.T. and September 26, 2014 at 9:30 am E.T. to discuss the funding opportunity and respond to questions. Registration information for the webinars is located below. These optional webinars will contain the same information, therefore it is not necessary for potential applicants to attend both webinars. Please note that no new information will be shared during the webinar. The webinar will be recorded and posted to the NACCHO website. Applicants can submit applications and questions regarding this announcement at any time and do not have to wait for optional webinar in order to begin or submit applications and questions. The webinar will be recorded and posted to the NACCHO website.

All necessary information regarding the project and application process may be found in this Request for Application (RFA). Applicants may pose individual questions to NACCHO at any point during the application process by e-mailing breastfeeding@naccho.org.
ELIGIBILITY AND CONTRACT TERMS

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

This RFA is open to any public or private entity (including local health departments, non-profit, faith-based, and community-based organizations).

CONTRACT TERMS

Agreement with NACCHO standard contract terms and conditions is a requirement. No modifications to the terms or contract language will be made. Contractors that cannot agree to NACCHO’s contract language should not apply for this initiative. As part of the application, the contractor/organization will be asked to verify that he/she has read NACCHO’s standard contract language (see Appendix 1) and has provided a copy to the individual with signing authority at your organization for advanced consideration. If you are an applicant from Florida, please contact NACCHO immediately for a copy of the Florida standard contract.

Applicants should review all terms and conditions to determine whether or not they are appropriate for submitting a proposal.

OTHER

Any application that fails to satisfy the deadline requirements will be considered non-responsive and will not be considered for funding under this announcement. NOTE: Multiple applications from an organization are not allowable. However, organizations or agencies have the ability to submit joint applications for this grant.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Please note the following deadlines and events for this application:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informational Webinar</td>
<td>September 25, 2014, 1:30 pm E.T. (&lt;Register&gt;)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September 26, 2014, 9:30 am E.T. (&lt;Register&gt;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Notice of Intent Deadline (Optional)</td>
<td>September 29, 2014, 6:30 pm E.T. (&lt;Submit&gt;)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application Submission Deadline</td>
<td>October 10, 2014, 6:30 pm E.T.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Award Notification Date</td>
<td>November 15, 2014</td>
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<td>Anticipated Contract Start Date</td>
<td>December 15, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grantee Regional Meetings</td>
<td>Dates to be Determined (January and February 2015)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 1 Contract End Date</td>
<td>June 30, 2015</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year 2 Contract End Date</td>
<td>May 31, 2016</td>
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Breastfeeding is one of the most effective measures mothers can take to prevent disease and protect the health of infants. Even though the benefits breastfeeding is widely accepted not all infants start or continue to breastfeed for the first six months of their lives. According to CDC, 79 percent of newborn infants initiate breastfeeding with 49 percent and 27 percent breastfeeding for six and twelve months, respectively.\(^1\) Only 19 percent of infants are exclusively breastfed for the first 6 months of their lives.\(^2\) African American women have the lowest breastfeeding initiation and duration rates of all racial and ethnic groups. In 2008, African American infants ever breastfed was 58.9 percent, compared to 75.2 percent and 80 percent for whites and Latinos, respectively. Infants breastfed at 6 months and 12 months was also lower among African American women, 30.1 and 12.5 percent, respectively.\(^3\)

The purpose of the Breastfeeding Project, is to increase implementation of evidence-based breastfeeding programs, practices, and services, at the community level, specifically focused on peer and professional lactation support to breastfeeding mothers in predominantly African American communities. The project will also help communities develop and maintain public health partnerships critical to building community support for breastfeeding. NACCHO, in partnership with CDC, will support community-level efforts to improve breastfeeding initiation and duration among African American and underserved women. The project will use a coordinated and comprehensive approach to engage local, state, and national partners, breastfeeding coalitions, and federal agencies to achieve the goals of the project and enhance community-level efforts to support lactating mothers.

The goals of the project are to:

- **Goal 1**: Increase implementation of evidence-based and innovative peer and professional breastfeeding support programs, practices, and services in predominantly African American communities.

- **Goal 2**: Increase local, state and national partnerships and awareness of the processes, successes, and challenges of implementing and expanding access to local peer and professional lactation support services.

NACCHO will identify community-based public, private, non-profit, and/or faith-based organizations to provide services to breastfeeding mothers and their infants within target communities; and will provide guidance, support and technical assistance (TA) to these organizations to initiate and sustain evidence-based and innovative models for peer and professional support. The *Surgeon General's Call to Action to Support Breastfeeding 2011* outlines an implementation strategy focused on providing funding and technical support to small community-based organizations to address the challenges that breastfeeding mothers encounter and increase the support needed for mothers to continue breastfeeding, especially in communities of color. Examples of these types of services that can be provided through this funding opportunity include, but are not limited to, training of current, existing staff in lactation care, counseling skills, case management, etc.; provision of walk-in locations for lactation expertise and support (baby café’s); and activities that systematically connect breastfeeding mothers to relevant resources within their communities.

The long term goal of this project is to increase breastfeeding initiation, duration, and exclusivity among African American and underserved populations in the US. This project is intended to increase access to and opportunities for peer and professional lactation support in predominantly African American communities, as well as address the needs of the underserved.

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\(^2\) CDC Breastfeeding Promotion and Support, retrieved August 31, 2014 at [www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/promotion/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/promotion/index.htm)

\(^3\) Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Progress in increasing breastfeeding and reducing racial/ethnic differences – United States, 2000-2008 births. MMWR 62(05); 77-80. Retrieved from [www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/wk/mm6205.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/wk/mm6205.pdf) on August 31, 2014
NACCHO will make at least 70 awards available to LHDs, community-based public, private, non-profit, or faith-based organizations, and lactation support providers for a 2-year breastfeeding project. Each grantee will receive up to $25,000, per year, to support project activities. The applicant selection criteria focuses on:

- **Community Need**: Community has low rates of breastfeeding initiation, low breastfeeding duration rates, or significant disparities in breastfeeding rates for African American women and underserved populations.

- **Organization Capacity**: Organization and providers have existing resources and capacity to address breastfeeding support for African American and underserved populations, but need additional resources to expand programs and services within the targeted population. Organizations and providers that have limited or no resources and capacity, must demonstrate they are building capacity and have identified breastfeeding support as a strategic priority through a community health assessment process.

- **Organization Collaborations**: Organization/Providers have a history of multi-sector collaborations or key partnerships with local and state breastfeeding coalitions, local health departments, or other organizations to support efforts.

Organizations and providers will be required to demonstrate that the population in proposed plans are at least 50% African American or underserved. Minimum geographic level served is at the zip code level. Selected organizations will be required to have support of the LHD as a partner in the project’s activities. Other factors, such as access to quality data and resources and existing local-state partnerships may also be used in the selection criteria.

**SCOPE OF WORK**

Grantees will be funded to support the breastfeeding needs of mothers through peer and professional lactation support activities. Grantees will be expected to complete the following activities over the course of the project period:

- Attend one (1) regional grantee meeting, with other selected grantees (location and dates to be determined).
- Develop and refine an 18-month work plan to provide lactation support for African American and underserved women.
- Participate in project assessment to determine training and technical assistance needs of the organization and staff.
- Participate in monthly conference calls, project related webinars, and other activities to support Breastfeeding Project activities and capacity-building in the local organization.
- Implement peer or professional lactation support activities, as defined in the project work plan.
- Collect individual participant data to facilitate understanding of program activity reach.
- Report aggregate data related to services provided, including but not limited to: number of women served, by race and age; number of women reached, by race and age; and number of referrals or connections to local resources.
- Participate in project-related evaluation activities, including pre-post assessments, focus groups, and other identified evaluation activities.

**METHOD OF PAYMENT**

NACCHO will reimburse the selected the grantee, quarterly, upon receipt of deliverables (e.g. progress reports, etc.) and invoices outlining project expenses, per the payment schedule outlined during the contracting process. Please note that NACCHO reserves the right to make changes to the project timeline and payment schedule if necessary.
APPLICATIONS DUE BY 6:30 PM E.T. ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2014

NACCHO SUPPORT

NACCHO staff will serve as a resource to the contractor to ensure adequate completion of the scope of work and achievement of project goals by fulfilling the following responsibilities:

- Provide background information related to the project, including access to NACCHO reports, data, and other resources necessary to complete the tasks above.
- Develop and support an online community of practice portal to disseminate data and information to the project sites.
- Provide direct technical assistance for completion of tasks, including periodic webinars and phone or e-mail consultations.
- Provide tools, guidance, and assistance to support organizational capacity to collect and report project data and evaluate project activities.
- Assist in the development models of sustainability of project activities.

PROPOSAL RESPONSE FORMAT

NOTICE OF INTENT

Prospective applicants are asked to submit an online notice of intent as early as possible, but no later than 6:30 p.m. E.T. on September 29, 2014. The notice of intent is not required, is not binding, and does not enter into the review of a subsequent application. The information that it contains allows NACCHO staff to estimate the potential review workload and plan the review process. Applicants wanting to submit a notice of intent should click here and submit requested information.

APPLICATION

Applications must be prepared using forms and information provided in this announcement. The project narrative must be limited to no more than 10 double spaced, 8½” x 11”, pages when printed by NACCHO, and the appendices to no more than 5, 8½” x 11”, pages when printed by NACCHO. The application should use an easily readable typeface, such as Times New Roman or Arial, 12-point font. Tables may be single spaced and use alternate fonts but must be easily readable. The page limit does not include budget, budget justification. All pages, charts, figures, and tables should be numbered. Applicants that exceed the specified limits of 10 pages of narrative or 5 pages of appendices when printed by NACCHO will be deemed non-responsive and will not be considered. It is recommended that applicants print out their applications before submitting electronically to ensure that they are within the page limit.

Successful applications will contain the following information:

A. Cover Sheet

Please complete the hyperlinked Vendor Information Form and submit as your application’s cover sheet. This information will also be used in the event that the submitting agency is selected and engages in a contract with NACCHO.

B. Problem Statement

Describe the target population to be served by this initiative. Including the community demographics and population size (at minimum, applicant should provide data at the zip code level). Describe how this project will assist with improving 1) breastfeeding rates among the target population, focusing on African American and underserved populations; 2) the current landscape of breastfeeding policies and practices in your community (please reference any practices identified in The CDC Guide to Strategies to Support Breastfeeding Mothers and Babies; 3) your community’s needs related to (a) implementing evidence-based and innovative breastfeeding programs, practices, and services and (b) developing and maintaining public health partnerships for breastfeeding. *Use data and community statistics wherever possible.
C. Proposal Overview

Describe, in detail, how you propose to meet each of the project goals and specifications outlined above in order to enhance your organization/agency and community’s ability to (a) implement evidence-based and innovative breastfeeding programs, practices, and services and (b) develop and maintain public health partnerships for breastfeeding.

D. Organizational Capacity and Experience

- Describe your organization mission and structure, and explain how your organization’s efforts align with the aims of this project.
- Describe your organizational/agency and staff qualifications and experience engaging in breastfeeding promotion efforts that involve (a) implementing evidence-based and innovative breastfeeding programs, practices, and services and (b) developing and maintaining public health partnerships for breastfeeding.
- Identify key staff responsible for completing your proposed work and provide sufficient detail to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the functions outlined in the RFA.
- Describe your organization’s capacity to collect or obtain data regarding services provided and women served.

E. Work Plan & Timeline

Develop an 18-month project work plan, using the template provided in Appendix 3, to describe your objectives and timeline for achieving project requirements and expected deliverables through June 2016.

F. Budget Proposal

Develop an 18-month line-item budget proposal, using the template provided in Appendix 4, not to exceed $25,000 each year, which clearly outlines the dollar amount and a narrative cost justification for each line item.

G. Attachments

Please include the following attachments with your application:

- Letter(s) of Support
  - Provide one letter of support, on official letterhead, from your local health officer demonstrating that your organization/agency has the necessary support and partnership to fully engage in the Breastfeeding Project.
  - Provide one letter of support, on official letterhead, from your fiscal agent or person authorized to establish a contract (See Vendor Information Sheet) with NACCHO. The letter should include the following statement: “I have received a copy of NACCHO’s standard contract language and reviewed the terms and conditions within.”
- Project work plan (see Appendix for an Example Work Plan)
- Budget worksheet (see Appendix for an Example Budget Worksheet)
APPLICATIONS DUE BY 6:30 PM E.T. ON FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2014

SELECTION CRITERIA

An Evaluation Team composed of representatives from NACCHO, CDC, and national partner organizations will review and score application for this RFA. The criteria listed below will be used to evaluate proposals for the purpose of ranking them in relative position based on how fully each proposal meets the requirements of this RFA:

- Completeness of the Proposal Narrative (Parts B – D)
- Evidence of need (e.g. population demographics) and ability to address needs of target population.
- Evidence of agency capacity to carry out the proposed activities
- Evidence of a history of working with local stakeholders to effect positive change
- Completeness, clarity, and perceived ability to implement proposed work plan (e.g., timeline, goals, objectives, evaluation)
- Realistic and appropriate budget
- Letter(s) of Support
- Demonstration of overall commitment

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Final response to this RFA should be submitted by October 10, 2014 at 6:30 pm E.T | 3:30 pm P.T. Responses submitted after this deadline will not be considered. Applications should be submitted in a single email to breastfeeding@naccho.org. Use as a Subject Line: Breastfeeding RFA. NACCHO will confirm receipt of all applications, however, receipt does not guarantee verification of completeness. All questions may also be directed to breastfeeding@naccho.org.

Please contact the NACCHO Breastfeeding Project at 202-783-5550 or breastfeeding@naccho.org if you do not receive a confirmation of receipt within 24 hours of submission.

RESOURCES

Please find below, links to additional information, forms, and resources needed for this application submission:

Required Application Resources
- Budget Proposal and Justification - Spreadsheet
- NACCHO Standard Contract Language (Member) – Contract
- NACCHO Standard Contract Language (Non-Member) – Contract
- Vendor Information Form - Form
- Work Plan Template – Form

General Resources and Information
- Census Bureau’s American Fact Finder - http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml
- Notice of Intent Submission - http://naccho.co1.qualtrics.com/SE/?SId=5V_Ouef3wk1zscWaH3
- Webinar Registration:
  - September 25, 2014, 1:30 pm E.T. (Register)
  - September 26, 2014, 9:30 am E.T. (Register)